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January 24, 1919.

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures,
70 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.

Attention: Mr. Cooks

Dear Sirs:-

Your letter of December 31st to Presbyterian Woman's Home Missionary Board has been referred to my desk for consideration and reply after having been held up in another office for some unknown reason. I should say that our Board would be greatly interested in the suggestion you have made and we would be glad to attend a preliminary conference on this subject unless our response comes too late. We are greatly interested in the matter which you have presented in your letter.

Awaiting your further advices with interest, I am

Very sincerely yours,

A-B

Superintendent of Schools.

The National Board of Review
of Motion Pictures
ESTABLISHED BY THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE
70 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.
TELEPHONE: CHELSEA 7565
PLEASE ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW

111
Mr
E.R.V.
Mrs. Gillaspie

December 31, 1918

Secretary,
Presbyterian Woman's Home Missionary Board,
156 Fifth Ave., City.

Dear Sir:

Our interest in the plans of some of the denominations for large advances in foreign and home missionary work prompts this circular letter to you and to the secretaries of various denominations. We understand that to make this important work for the Church of Christ successful it will be necessary to bring to the attention of people everywhere the results obtained in mission work and the methods which are now used in presenting the cause to the people both of our own land and of the rest of the world. To obtain the funds necessary also, popular support, based on knowledge, interest and enthusiasm, is needed.

One of the important instruments for reaching the people unquestionably is the motion picture. It attracts its millions every day in the week and can be used both in and out of the theatres. Since, however, it appeals to people without respect to their denominational affiliations, the missionary cause of the churches must be presented on an interdenominational basis. Some lessons have been learned from the use of the motion picture in the world war in welding the people of the United States into a unit, in presenting the needs of Liberty Loans, Red Cross and war charities, as well as painting the picture of American democracy to our Allies and to the neutral powers.

There is unquestioned need of collaboration between persons skilled in the effects produced by motion pictures and those who know the requirements of churches and the inspiring facts about home and foreign missions. Many projects have failed because of this lack of cooperation between individuals having different points of view but skilled in their own field.

There is no lack of inspiring themes, radiant personalities, and excellent stories; there is no question about the interest of the American people in the presentation of the right kind of facts thru the screen. We believe also there is every willingness on the part of the producers and distributers of motion pictures to render large service in the popularizing of mission needs.

Some conference is necessary, on an interdenominational basis, of the mission representatives, to decide about the advisability of using this medium. Later it will be valuable to call into the conference those who understand the limitations as well as the technique of motion picture production and distribution. This organization, standing midway between the two groups and thoroly interested in both, is willing to act as the agent for bringing about this result. If your board is interested to consider this in combination with representatives of other boards, kindly let me know, and the details of such a preliminary conference will be forwarded to you at an early date.

Respectfully yours,

Orrin G. Cocke

Advisory Secretary

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February 14, 1919.

My dear Mr. Cocks:-

As I am just leaving town I have only time to acknowledge your letter of February 4th. I share in your regret that other Boards cannot show sufficient interest in this matter to warrant a conference.

Very truly yours,

Superintendent of Schools.

Mr. Orrin G.Cocks,Secretary,
National Committee for Better
Films,
70 Fifth Ave., N.Y.
G-B

111
M.

The National Committee
for
Better Films

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(ESTABLISHED BY THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE)

70 FIFTH AVENUE

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2/14/19

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Please address all Correspondence to the National Committee for Better Films

February 4,1919.

Mr.M.C.Allabe,
Superintendent of Schools,
156 Fifth Ave.,
New York City.

My dear Mr.Allabe:

I have your letter of January 24th and report that up to date the secretary of Home and Foreign Missions of the different denominations have not expressed sufficient interest in the plan for a combined conference to make it worth while to call it at present. I regret that this is the case because I am firmly of the conviction that no one agency can be used so effectively in developing popular interest in and popular support for modern missions as can the motion picture. The commercial manufacturers of films, however, would never think of turning to missionary heros or missionary stations for film themes were this subject not presented to them by representatives of all denominations. From your more intimate touch with these officials you might call them to assist us in developing such an interest as will warrant such a conference.

Faithfully yours,

Orrin G Cocks

Secretary.

OGC-CNK

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of the National Board consists of approximately 200 members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures. Their names appear in the Report of the Board.

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March 12, 1919

Dear Friend:

We are wondering whether you were able to attend the private review at Wurlitzer Hall on March 4, to which The National Board invited you. If so, may we ask you to kindly fill out the questionnaire handed you at the review and mail it to this office at your early convenience? We have received quite a number of the questionnaires but do not feel that we have sufficient data to warrant making up what might be considered a complete report.

The purpose of The National Board in holding the reviews is not for entertainment but rather to gather information which may prove valuable to the Board in conducting its work. Accordingly we depend upon the cooperation of those present, in giving their thoughtful attention to the questionnaires issued relative to the films offered for discussion. We believe you will agree that The National Board, in order to make its decisions as representative of public opinion as possible, and its constructive work in encouraging artistry of production as effective as possible, must from time to time seek the opinion of persons not intimately connected with the daily work of the Board. It is with this in mind that the Executive Committee have authorized the holding of private reviews. These will have to be abandoned unless they secure for the Board the assistance for which they are intended.

In case you did not receive one of the folders outlining our work in the field of the development of the use of educational pictures, we enclose one herewith. May we ask you to read it over carefully; also to fill out and return the questionnaire handed out at the review, in case you attended and have not already returned it to us?

Sincerely yours,

WDM-

Executive Secretary

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The National Committee for Better Films

A COMMITTEE OF

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures
(ESTABLISHED BY THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE)

70 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

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ORRIN G. COCKS, Secretary and Editor
"Bulletin of the Affiliated Committees for Better Films"

Please address all Correspondence to the
National Committee for Better Films

CONFERENCE

September 24, 1919

Mrs.M. C. Alleben,
Womens Board Home Missions,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mrs. Alleben:

The National Board of Review, through this Committee, purposes forming a religious advisory committee in connection with its Better Films work. We desire to have you serve as a member of this national advisory committee.

We have for nearly eleven years examined and passed motion pictures for general commercial entertainment. About five years ago we began selecting better types of pictures for more particular audiences and for special groups. This work of selection has extended until now we publish regularly lists for the family, for young people, for children, for schools and libraries, and other educational groups, for economic and laboring groups, and for the church. This movement, therefore, is on a solid basis of accomplishment rather than on one of hopes and dreams.

The interest in the motion picture for various church purposes is growing rapidly. Already attempts have been made and are continuing to be made to meet this need both through production and through distribution. Some companies aim to serve the church exclusively. Most of the commercial motion picture distributors have assured us that they are ready to rent a certain part of their product to the churches. The time is ripe, therefore, in a definite and far-reaching fashion to guide and to lead this movement. And in no other organization is there the same impartial point of view or basis for sympathetic national service as in the National Board. Nor is there any other organization to which so many churchmen turn for assistance on motion picture problems.

We have no commercial interest whatsoever in exploiting pictures. We are entirely impartial in reviewing and selecting the product of all companies. Our aims in the department of Better Films for the churches are as follows:

1 to discover and to establish principles satisfactory to churches
2 to select pictures adapted for religious uses
3 to publish lists promptly and regularly

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of the National Board consists of approximately 120 members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures. Their names appear in the Report of the Board.

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4 to develop continuous and high grade service to the churches by existing and future companies
5 to direct ideas in the production, distribution and use of proper films
6 to develop sentiment in favor of the widespread use of pictures
7 to furnish the churches with inspiration and practical suggestions
8 to work impartially with all practical and honorable groups, and
9 to aid the churches by encouraging the production and circulation of dramatic pictures which help to build up religious convictions both in the church and among the non-church population.

We have become convinced that the motion picture is a great aid to the cause of religion which is scarcely recognized. It conveys ideas and establishes convictions both through the interesting educational pictures and the absorbing silent drama. It touches the emotions and will without the spoken work of advice. It has demonstrated its power for inspirational and cultural purposes. It may also arouse people to keener appreciation of religion, character, missions, social service, patriotism, and idealism both in and out of the churches.

Unquestionably this new field of religious work must be guided by those who are primarily interested in the progress of religion in all denominations and creeds. A fundamental need is that of personal convictions on questions of principles, standards, selection and methods. Satisfactory work can be accomplished only by the assistance of those who know the needs of the church and who believe that the motion picture is a worthy instrument for aiding the church. Will you be one of thirty members of a national advisory committee composed of skilled persons of all religious groups?

For your information we are sending you under separate cover some literature and lists which will show you something of the concrete work already done by The National Board in constructive fields of motion picture selection.

Faithfully yours,

Orrin G Cocks

Secretary.

OGC/JHB

see L/ Mrs. Bennett W. M. M. S
10/7/19— 114

Mc Millen's paper

Woman's Board of Home Missions
of the
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

September 24, 1919

For Miss Voss-

I have spent a good deal of time during the past summer in comparing statistics from the large giving synodicals and presbyterials in special relation to the amounts they give to the Women's Board of Foreign Missions and the Woman's Board of Home Missions, and I have found that the percentage given by our women to the Foreign Mission cause is 73% of the whole amount given, whereas the Woman's Board of Home Missions receives 27%. These figures were taken from the 1917-1918 reports of the two Boards.

My first thought was to get something started to counteract this large discrepancy between the receipts of the two Boards, and I have come to the conclusion it is simply because the Foreign Board creates more interest in their work than the Home Board does. With this in mind I thought we could do something to create a larger interest in the big giving synodicals and presbyterials if we told the people in picture form just the kind of work we are doing.

I then went to Underwood and Underwood, which are the largest photographers in the world, and to my mind the most reliable, and put my plan before them. They said it was a good thing and entirely feasible. They gave me approximate costs, which could probably be pruned down 10 or 15%. The idea is to send a moving picture operator with a machine to our interesting schools and take such views as may be decided upon to be used as lectures in the above mentioned synodicals. Pictures requiring one week for operator to go and return will cost approximately about $500.- and expenses. Of all the pictures taken Underwood and Underwood will always keep the negatives, and will give us two films one thousand feet long of the same subject. One film is good for three

hundred shows if taken care of, and these films can also be mended from time to time from the negatives where the wear shows on the picture. One film of one thousand feet can be duplicated at any time at a cost of 12 1/2¢ per foot.

They gave a rough estimate covering the islands of Porto Rico and Cuba. This means that they will give one reel of one thousand feet to the island of Cuba and one to the island of Porto Rico. The total cost of this will be approximately $4000. Then the last estimate we took up was the school at Sitka, Alaska. They claim that it will take some eight weeks for their operator to go and come and accomplish the purpose, and that the cost of the full operation in Sitka will approximately be $4000.

Then for the mountain field my thought was to include all of the Asheville Schools, Hot Springs, Langdon Memorial School, and the Laura Sunderland School in one reel of one thousand feet at $750. The next reel is the Mormon, to include New Jersey Academy and Wasatch Academy. This would also be $750. The next reel is the Mexican reel, the Allison-James School, Menaul School, and Forsythe Memorial School at a cost of $750. The next reel is that of the Indian field, Kirkwood Memorial School, Tucson Indian Training School, and the Wolf Point School. This reel because of the inaccessible places that the operator will be compelled to visit will cost about $1000. The total cost for two reels of each lecture according to the above figures will be $11250.

Now as to the projecting cameras. They are easily operated and properly insolated to comply with the laws of the fire underwriters in each state. They can be attached to any electric light socket, or where there is no socket a cable can be run to the nearest electric light socket and current supplied from there. There is absolutely no need of our lecturers requiring a permit to show these pictures at any place in the United States. These cameras will be $250.- each, and according to the scheme of distribution as hereinafter outlined it will require four cameras costing $1000. This will bring a total cost to the Board of $12,250.

To show what may be accomplished in picture form I shall give you an

idea of how the San Juan Hospital should be taken and also the Sheldon Jackson School. These two comprise to my mind our most interesting work, and are well worth the price charged.

San Juan Hospital

The operator to take a bird's-eye view of the harbor;then entering San Juan, as our hospital is on the coast, he will linger somewhat over our hospital site. This of course will be explained in words before the picture is projected. After landing he will go up to the hospital grounds and take a complete view of the building, front, and rear, and sides. This will show to everybody present the kind of building that their money is invested in. Then I would show a picture of Dr. Hildreth and assistant surgeons,with proper explanations. Next I would show the Superintendent with her hospital nursing staff, both native and American. Next would be a general view of the private rooms, if possible including the name plate showing the name of the giver of the money which erected each room. Next I would show the general wards showing the patients being cared for by the nurses. The Underwood people suggested a picture of a patient before the operation, the picture of a major operation, and the patient after the operation. This seems a trifle delicate, but you may include it if you so desire. Then I would go to the day dispensary and show a picture of that room, also a picture of the people waiting outside.to be looked after. Then a picture of the doctors and nurses caring for these outdoor patients, and, if possible, gather together types of healed future Americans. I also think it would be well to include a song and prayer service as conducted in the wards and private rooms. This will show that we not only heal the body, but take care of the mind and soul as well. The above covers San Juan Hospital.

The next point of interest I should judge would be the Marina Neighborhood House at Mayaguez. Here could be shown the industrial school and type of work done. Also a picture of the pupils and teachers at a song and religious service. The next point of interest in Porto Rico would be

Aguadilla. As I understand it the work at Aguadilla is nearly all educational, and it would not take long to get a picture of the pupils and teachers and give an example of some of their work.

Sitka, Alaska

There are many interesting views that could be taken of Sitka Sound, and of the town of Sitka itself before entering the harbor. Many mountains in the distance can be seen upon entering the harbor. The Sitka shore itself lies rather low, and would not make a very good picture I am afraid. So many American people know so little about Alaska, and these views would show one what kind of life to expect in a place of that kind. Then I would have a close up picture taken of our administration buildings, with the work of each, and showing what each building contains. The plans for taking the picture of Sitka would be left to the stage director and to one who knows more of the kind of work done at Sitka than I do. For example I think that we have a boat building class there. That would be very interesting. We also operate a forging shop, where the pupils make hammerheads, and many other implements of iron and steel. All of these could be shown to good advantage.

In all the other fields before mentioned, including the Mormon, Indian, and Mexican Field, the pictures can be staged in reference to the points of interest to be covered. This could be cared for by your secretary and Superintendent of each school. I do not think I need to say that everything should be in readiness, so that when the operator arrives there will be no loss of time. It may be that he will be compelled to wait a day or so longer at various places because of the weather, but we do not want to be responsible for keeping him two or three days at a place because of the unreadiness of the school. It was my thought that each reel be thought out beforehand and appropriate lines written as a preface to each picture ,so that when the full lecture is in reel form it will tell a godd story,properly explained.

Method of Distribution

My plan is to divide the United States into four sections, the dividing line for the East and West being the Mississippi River, the dividing line for the North and South being the Mason Dixon line. These will be called Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4. For example, District No. 1 would have headquarters in New York. This district would comprise the New England States, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan. This district will be fitted with one projecting machine and seven reels of lectures covering our whole work. Since the headquarters would be in New York, it would be within easy traveling distance of any point within this district. As it is the largest giving district in the United States, it will require a good deal of intelligence to place these films and cover the whole field. My idea for laying out a lecture for this district would be to take a map of the United States, drawn to scale, and with the assistance of the Minutes of General Assembly, that shows the location of each church, divide the district into lecturing sections. For example, a church having a membership of say 250 members, I would decide upon as a place to give the lecture. Then I would invite all Presbyterian church members within easy traveling distance of this church to this lecture. Such a method would cover the country much quicker than if the lectures were shown to just large churches, and would take in communities where they had a membership of 15, 20, or 500.

The invitations to these smaller churches in the vicinity of the larger ones can be sent from the head office here in New York, either through the presbyterial treasurer or some local officer of the church in which the lecture is to be given. It will have to be worked out by your committee whether it is desirable for a lecturer to take the whole seven lectures with her, or take one and finish that before starting another. You can decide that, however, very easily.

District No. 2 would comprise the states of Kentucky, Virginia,

West Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, the district headquarters being in Louisville, Kentucky. I chose Louisville because of its central location in the district, and also because of the fact that the Synod of Kentucky is more interested in Home Mission work within the bounds of Kentucky than at any other place. I have found from experience that we have no trouble in getting money for Kentucky objects, but that they will not support a mission work outside of Kentucky. Therefore, I think that they need these picture educators very much.

As to the cost of the above project, let me say that the reels and cameras would cost $12,250, the field workers being used to give the lectures. As the budget already carries their salaries and expenses there would be no additional cost. I may say that the total cost of the whole idea will be about $12,000. This I have arranged for in the following way: Your budget calls for an expenditure of $18,000. for three years' insurance from May 16, 1919. Owing to a little good luck this insurance was placed at $10,000., thus effecting a saving of $8000. The other $4000.- needed could very easily be clipped from the budget of the Literature and Publication Committee without it being felt very badly, and also with the feeling that the $4000. thus used would be really doing advertising work, although not in the form of reading matter. It seems to me that the whole thing can be taken care of without increasing the budget one cent, but the whole thing of course depends upon the intelligent handling it receives.

W J McMillan

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National Committee for Better Films

September 30, 1919

Mrs. M. C. Alleben
Womens Board Home Missions
156 5th Ave.
New York City

Dear Sir:

Through carelesness on the part of the office boy the form letter mailed to you recently may have been placed in the wrong envelope. We are very sorry for this for we desired to present the subject as intimately and clearly as possible. Our hope is that you may consider the substance of the letter as though written to you personally and consent to serve as a member of our National Religious Advisory Committee.

We feel that both you and we have a constructive service to perform in these days of ferment to utilize the motion picture in the finest way for the inspiration, instruction and wholesome entertainment of the American people. We agree to exert the influence of the National Board with both public and producer when once we have clear cut opinions on the religious use of the film.

Trusting your decision may be favorable, I am

Faithfully yours,

Orrin G Cocks

Secretary.

OGC/JHB

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Mrs. Margaret D. Conway
Evanston, Ill.
Dr. Harris F. Rall
Fargo, N. D.
A. G. Arvold
Flushing, N. Y.
Dan C. Beard
Geneva, N. Y.
Miss Mary Gray Peck
Indianapolis, Ind.
Harry C. Hurd
Kansas City, Mo.
L. A. Halbert
Lisle, N. Y.
R. H. Edwards
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Everett C. Beach
S. M. Cooper
Dr. Albert Shiels
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John M. Dean
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M. L. Burton
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Robbins Gilman
Nashville, Tenn.
J. E. McCulloch
Hamilton Love
New Haven, Conn.
Anson Phelps Stokes
New York City
Felix Adler
Alfred J. Boulton
Robert W. Bruere
Joseph R. Buchanan
John Bates Clark
Andrew W. Edson
Robert E. Ely
Robert W. de Forest
Eugene C. Foster
Franklin H. Giddings
E. Trowbridge Hall
Thomas C. Hall
Hamilton Holt
Frederic C. Howe
Gerhard G. Lomer
Percy Mackaye
V. Everit Macy
William H. Maxwell
H. Pereira Mendes
Frank Mason North
James B. Reynolds
James E. Rogers
Franklin Sargent
Jacob H. Schiff
Samuel Schulman
Edwin R. A. Seligman
Albert Shaw
Miss Mary Shaw
Joseph Silverman
Miss Laura Skinner
George J. Smith
Oscar S. Straus
Talcott Williams
Egerton L. Winthrop, Jr.
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William T. Foster
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Sergeant Richard Gamble
Randolph, N. Y.
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San Francisco, Cal.
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Mrs. Bert Schlesinger
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Miss Minnie E. Paddock
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Festus Foster
Trenton, N. J.
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WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

11
M.

October 23, 1919

Memorandum for Mr. Allaben from Miss Sheibley:

I think I am the logical one to substitute on this committee. However I believe that you should write the National Committee to this effect.

10/24/19

A. M. S. Assistant Secretary

111
M.

October 27, 1919.

Mr. Orrin G. Cocks:-
Secretary of the National Committee for Better Films,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

My dear Mr. Cocks:-

Your letter of September 24th received during my absence from the office has been brought to my attention and in reply I wish to say that I am greatly interested in the efforts which your committee is making. Owing to the fact, however, that I shall be away from the city a great deal this coming winter, I do not believe it would be possible for me to serve on this committee. I would therefore suggest that Miss Mabel Sheibley the Assistant Secretary of our Board be asked to serve in my place.

Very truly yours,

Superintendent of Schools.

G-L.

1919 11

Miss Shibley

Every thing is now covered but I omitted to include in the plan the fact that no admission be charged at these movies - the point is instruction for all Presbyterians - if admission were charged it would possibly keep some one away that really wanted to know

Morrison